Status of Jain Community

3423. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Commission for Minorities had in the year 1994 recommended inclusion of Jain Community as a minority community under the National Commission for Minorities Act;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Jain Community is at present in the minority and its presence is spread over in all the States and Union Territories and as such being as distinct religious community it deserve to be given the minority status by Government; and

(c) if so, by when a decision in this regard is to be taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) In its Annual Report for 1994-95, the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) had recommended that, as a separate religion, Jains deserve to be notified as a minority community. However, in its Annual Report for 1997-98, the NCM stated that the demand of Jains for minority status is one viewpoint prevailing in the community and recommended that the Government must through its own resources ascertain the broad consensus on this issue keeping in view all dissenting voices.

(b) and (c) As per Census 2001, the total population of Jains is 4,225,053 which is 0.4% of the total population of the country. The Jain community is spread throughout India except in the Union Territory of Lakshadweep.

A Civil Appeal was filed by Bal Patil & Another seeking issuance of direction to the Government to notify Jains as a minority community. In accordance with the recommendation of the Standing committee on social Justice & Empowerment, Government has examined the implications of the Judgement in this case and is proposing official amendments to the Constitution (One Hundred and Third Amendment) Bill, 2004.